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FORUM

CFV never called for a boycott, period

By Will Perkins

For a fascinating study of distortion and manipulation of a story for political purposes, look no further than the so-called Colorado for Families "boycott." Or more accurately, the truth behind how the whole pseudo-story gained momentum to begin with.

This whole controversy arose from one erroneous Rocky Mountain News article based on a relentless phone grilling at the hands of News reporter Thaddeus Herrick. During this interview Herrick showered CFV executive director Kevin Tebedo with questions about CFV's Community Watch seminars, seemingly obsessed with wringing out of him some kind of ammunition about CFV supposedly endorsing "boycotts." He explicitly told Herrick CFV's stated position three times: "CFV does not endorse, and is not calling for, boycotts. Period."

Having failed to gain sufficiently provocative statements from him, Herrick ranged to a new subject, or so it seemed: Kevin's personal buying habits. He elaborated on one point by telling Herrick: "What I'm saying is you're not a bad person if you choose not to buy Levi's or cancel your subscription to the Rocky Mountain News." Kevin never dreamed the reporter would construe this into a claimed CFV "boycott" against these companies.

Herrick then asked which companies had a widespread reputation in the Pikes Peak region for either opposing Amendment 2 or having homosexual non-discrimination policies. Kevin simply named them for Herrick, but did not call them "enemies." That's because we've never had a so-called "enemies" list — formal or informal, written or spoken. As a matter of fact, we do not actively oppose any specific company in any way — let alone propose "boycotting" them.

The truth is, Amendment 2 gives companies the freedom to voluntarily establish a non-discrimina-

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tion policy if they choose — whether they wish to favor homosexuals or not favor them. And as long as such a policy respects its employees' and vendors' personal conscience, CFV has always supported that right. The only time CFV has ever mentioned opposing companies at all is when those policies have degenerated into coercing employees and outside vendors into violating their conscience. We've never called a "boycott" even against those companies.

The word only appears in our seminar literature once — and again, it wasn't announcing "CFV boycotts" of any kind. It was part of a whole range of options we presented to our supporters in the interest of giving them the most thorough information available. Just because a group comprehensively lists all the possible options doesn't mean it's advocating each of the options per se. Nevertheless, our seminar outlines have been revised to eliminate any future potential for misconception or misrepresenta-

tion by the press.

Imagine our surprise, therefore, to open up the Rocky Mountain News and read "Springs group proposes boycott," complete with lists of companies supposedly targeted, and companies named as "enemies." Kevin's words about personally not buying Levi's now read "we're saying" instead of "I'm saying," creating the appearance of describing official CFV policy. Presto: a "CFV boycott."

It's interesting to note what was made of this phony story: It was used to manufacture the illusion of equal guilt on both sides of the issue. "Both sides are equally stained with the 'B-word'" some wags have now begun to say. Say what? One appearance of the word in a seminar outline now carries as much weight as a months-long, indiscriminate black-mall of our entire state? Come on. There's not a shred of parity between a word in CFV's seminar outline and the economic terrorism waged by many of our opponents.

It's so interesting that some voices who've been less than strident in their opposition of boycotts suddenly became much more vocal when this pseudo-story broke. Could some anti-Amendment 2 forces have used this as a pretext to make their move? I think so.

I regret having to dissect a conversation this tediously, but in the face of such extreme and painstaking distortions, I have no choice. To Amendment 2 supporters and opponents alike, I say: "Watch us in the weeks ahead. If we really were calling for a boycott, you'd be hearing about us putting one into action. You won't. Why? We never called for it in the first place. Period!"

Perkins is a Colorado Springs business man and the executive board chairman of Colorado for Family Values.

THE WEST

sts want moratorium on cyanide-leaching process

ed of gold-extraction procedure

rates.
e coalition's campaign of
paper and broadcast ads
es for state regulations for
relatively new procedure,
media accounts of prob-
with cyanide-leach mines
as the Summitville Mine in
ado.

e organization urges people
ite state officials and law-
ers in Olympia, where both
bers of the Washington
lature are expected to vote
week on whether to create a
force to study open-pit cya-
leach mining.
anide leaching is used at

open-pit mines to flush gold
from ore. Cyanide-laced water
from spent ore is released into
tailing ponds. In the mid-1980s,
the U.S. Environmental Protec-
tion Agency found evidence of
cyanide leakage — mostly minor
— from tailing ponds at such
mines.

The coalition also is con-
cerned about the scars left by
open-pit mining.

Houston-based Battle Moun-
tain Gold Corp. plans to seek
permits later this year for an
open-pit cyanide-leach mine on
Buckhorn Mountain in Okanogan

County, Wash., the coalition
says.

The project would leave a pit
"deep enough to put the Seattle
Needle and the Seattle Center
into," said the coalition's execu-

tive director, Chris Carrel.

Cyanide leaching is "in its in-
fancy and potty training," he
said. "We want to make sure it
doesn't get potty trained in
Washington."

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